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To: Food Stamp Handbook Holders

From: Rick Zynda, Director
Office of Nutrition Services and Program Integrity (ONSPI)

RE: **FS Handbook Release 02-03**

DATE: June 10, 2002

EFFECTIVE DATE

Implement the instructions at application, recertifications, and change, or, if you wish, earlier. The following policy additions or changes are **effective 06/10/02**, unless otherwise noted.

POLICY CHANGES

Major Change with this release

Deletion of Appendix Chapter 8 Work Requirements: This appendix chapter deals with FSET and work requirements. There is a separate FSET Manual that is maintained by the Bureau of Work Support Programs. Chapter 8 of the FS Handbook and the FSET manual contain much of the same information, but at times are conflicting because they are updated at different times. To avoid confusion, Chapter 8 is being removed from this handbook and a link to the online FSET Manual at <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/manuals/fset/TOC.pdf> will be found at Appendix Chapter 08.01.00. All work program and ABAWD policy will be contained in the FSET manual.

Shelter and Utilities
Computation Unit Q. 2

Dotpoint "2a" was clarified to explain that CARES requires an application after an RFA has been made.

01.03.01

Old Policy: The FS group isn't categorically eligible if any member of its food unit loses FS eligibility because s/he:

1. Was disqualified for an IPV or,
2. Did not cooperate with a FS work registration requirement.

New Policy: The FS group isn't categorically eligible if any member of its food unit loses FS eligibility because s/he:

1. Was disqualified for an IPV or,
2. Did not cooperate with a FS work registration requirement, or
3. **Was disqualified due to a drug felony sanction.**

01.05.03

Adoption Assistance

Old Policy: The primary person may exclude or include the child. If the child is included, count the subsidized adoption payment as income.

New Policy: The child must always be included in the FS Group.

01.09.00

Effective 05/01/01. Person add policy was updated to reflect the new policy stated in Operations Memo 01-23.

Old Policy: For person adds, make the change effective the first day of the month following the month of the person add, whether it was reported timely or untimely.

New Policy: When a FS household reports the gain of a new member, make this addition to the household effective the first day of the month *following* the month in which the person add is reported to the FS agency if required verifications are received within 10 days of the request.

If verifications are not received within 10 days and the case hasn't closed, make the change effective the first of the month following the month the verifications are received.

02.02.00 The term "welfare hotel" was replaced with "rooming house." There was no policy change.

04.02.00, 04.02.01 A reference to the Alien Eligibility Chart in the Income Maintenance Manual (IMM) was changed to Operations Memo 98-86. This chart was removed from the IMM.

08.00 Chapter 8.00 Work Programs was deleted from the FS Online Handbook and moved to the FSET Manual. A link to this manual is found here.

08.07.00 This section of Chapter 8 was moved to a new subsection of Chapter 1 called "01.10.00 Strikers."

12.02.01.01 **Effective 04/15/02**

Old Policy: The FS group must report a change of more than \$25.00 a month in unearned income or a change in source of the unearned income. Both changes must be reported to the FS Agency within 10 days of the date the change is known to the household.

New Policy: The old policy remains except for changes in child support.

Child Support Exception: Changes in child support income of \$100 or more must be reported within 10 days. Changes of less than \$100 in child support, family maintenance, alimony, or child support arrears need not be reported. However, any reported changes must be acted on timely by the worker.

12.02.14 **Adoption Assistance**

Old Policy: Count the subsidized adoption payments as income if the child is included. The primary person may exclude or include the child.

New Policy: Count the subsidized adoption payments as income.

12.02.23 The list of means tested programs in paragraph "2a" was updated to include: W-2, W-2 Child Care, the Refugee Assistance Program, or SSI.

12.02.33 **Old Policy:** Count net SSI income unless a recoupment is taken out for an SSI Intentional Program Violation. In that case, budget the net pre-recoupment amount. See 12.02.11 for information on SSI lump sum payments.

New Policy: Count net SSI income. **There are no work or school attendance requirements for this program. See Appendix 17.02.00 for rules regarding FS benefit increases disallowed due to decreases in benefits from means-tested programs. See 12.02.11 for information on SSI lump sum payments.**

16.04.06 **Medical Expensed Not Allowed (Dotpoint 5)**

Old Policy: Nursing home insurance policies that do not pay medical bills

New Policy: Premiums for nursing home insurance policies that would not be used to cover allowed medical expenses.

Since these premiums are allowed in the MA eligibility determination for waiver and deductible cases, these premiums will almost always be allowed as medical expense deductions for FS.

16.08.01 A reference to CARES screen AFTQ was added and instructions were given to answer "Y" to the LIHEAP question if the FS AG has received LIHEAP in the current or previous heating season. There was no policy change.

16.08.08.01 **Shared Residence/Utilities**

Old Policy: The only exception to this is when LIHEAP is received and the SUA is chosen. In that case, the FS AG may receive the full SUA even if the utilities are shared.

New Policy: (Sentences deleted)

17.02.00 Two specific reasons were given for not increasing the FS allotment when a means tested program's benefits are reduced for non-cooperation:

1. **Failure to comply with work programs; or**
2. **Failure to comply with school attendance requirement (Learnfare).**

21.01.00 **Application**

Clarification was added to this section on FS applications. It is not new policy and was originally included in Operations Memo 00-46.

If a person calls or comes into the wrong agency (county or tribal office) to apply for FS, the agency's minimum duty is to inform the person they are in the wrong office, give the person the address and telephone number of the appropriate county or tribal office and explain the fact that their filing date and the application process cannot begin until they file an application with the appropriate FS office. If the household has completed the application, the agency must also offer to forward the application to the appropriate office that same day.

If a person comes into the wrong office, but is in the right county to apply for FS, s/he must be allowed to apply and set the filing date. The agency will complete Client Registration in CARES, schedule an eligibility interview in the correct office, transfer the case, and give the client notice of the appointment and location.

21.02.00 A clarifying statement was added to this section on FS Reviews. When a face to face review cannot be completed and the AG is eligible for a non-face to face review, it must be done as a telephone review.

22.01.00 The following was added to the Verification Introduction section for clarification:

Note: During the application or review processing period, do not deny the FS group for failure to provide the required verification until:

1. 10 calendar days following the issuance of the request for verification, or
2. 30 calendar days following the application filing date, whichever is later.

The household has primary responsibility for providing documentary evidence to support statements on the application and to resolve any questionable information. However, you must assist the household in obtaining this verification if the household is otherwise cooperating and is unable to obtain the verification and requests the agency's assistance in obtaining the verification.

The general Income Maintenance verification rules are as follows:

1. **Only verify those items required to determine eligibility and benefits for the**

programs for which you are testing eligibility.

2. Do not verify an item that is not required to be verified and is not documented as questionable.
3. Avoid over-verification (requiring excessive pieces of evidence for any one item). If you have all the verification you need, don't continue to require added verification.
4. Do not verify information already verified unless you believe the information is fraudulent or differs from more recent information. If you suspect fraud exists, determine if you should make a referral for fraud or for front-end verification.
5. Do not exclusively require one particular type of verification when various types are adequate and available.

22.02.00

This section on Nonfinancial Verification was updated.

Old Policy: The following nonfinancial information must be verified prior to certification for initial benefits:

New Policy: With the exception of expedited issuance cases, the following information must be verified prior to certification for initial benefits, at review if a change is reported, and when a change is reported:

22.02.01

This section on Residence Verification was clarified to state that homeless individuals and newly arrived migrants need not verify residence:

Old Policy: Applicants must verify their address at the time of application and recipients must verify their address when they move.

New Policy: Applicants must verify their address at the time of application and recipients must verify their address when they move.

An exception exists for homeless persons and migrants. Don't require residence verification for homeless persons (09.02.00) or migrant assistance groups (12.03.08) newly arrived in the area. Do not verify shelter and/or utilities as part of residence verification. That is a separate verification requirement.

22.02.04

This text was added to the beginning of the subsection on Alien Eligibility and Citizenship Verification for clarification:

Verify the immigration status of applicant non-citizens. If a non-citizen does not want the agency to contact INS to verify his or her immigration status, the agency must give the applicant the option of withdrawing the application or participating without that member. An undocumented alien is ineligible until acceptable documentation is provided unless the local agency has submitted a request for verification and is awaiting a response from INS, SSA (verification of work quarters), or another federal agency.

22.03.00

This section on Financial Verification was updated.

Old Policy: The following financial information must be verified prior to certification for initial benefits:

New Policy: With the exception of expedited issuance cases, the following information must be verified at application, review, and reported change:

22.03.01

Policy for Gross Non-exempt Income Verification was added. This is not new policy. It was taken from Operations Memo 01-01.

22.03.01.01

A new subsection on Earned Income Verification was added. The policy is not new. The information was taken from Operations Memo 01-01.

- 22.03.01.02 A new subsection on Self Employment Verification was added. The policy is not new. The information was taken from Operations Memo 01-01.
- 22.03.04 Verification policy was incorrectly worded in this section on Shelter and Utility Expenses in the last release. It was corrected here.
- Incorrect Policy:** Shelter and Utility expenses need to be verified at application, review, when changes are reported, and when the group moves.
- Correct Policy:** Shelter and Utility expenses need to be verified at application, at review when changes are reported, when the group moves, and anytime there is a reported change. See 16.07.00 Shelter and 16.08.00 Utilities.
- 24.02.02.01.01 The section was clarified. The alternate payee name should be the name of a person, not the name of a facility.
- 24.02.02.02.01 The section was clarified. The authorized buyer's name should be the name of a person, not the name of a facility.
- 24.02.05 The section was clarified. No demographic changes are sent to CEFS if benefits were expunged and BIET displays an "E" status for the current cardholder(s). Demographic changes are sent when a future EBT benefit is sent.
- 24.02.12.06 Benefit replacement does not include the restoration of expunged benefits. A reference was added to refer to 24.02.14 for instructions to restore benefits that were returned due to expungement.
- 24.02.14 The section was clarified. The expungement process occurs even when the balance is \$0. The CEFS account status changes from active to dormant. The word "replace" was changed to "restore" so the sentence reads "Do not issue an auxiliary to *restore* benefits returned due to expungement if the benefits are 365 days old." Replacement of benefits is different than the restoration of benefits due to expungement.
- 24.02.16 Information was added regarding use of the QUEST card in other states. A new list of states/territories was added. Use this list to determine if EBT benefits should be converted to coupons when the household moves out of state.
- The link to the list of QUEST states was removed. Don't use the list of QUEST states on the EBT web page to determine whether benefits should be converted to coupons.
- The headers 24.02.16.02 Conversion Process and 24.02.16.03 Issuing Auxiliaries were added. The section on Converting Future Benefits to Coupons was changed from 24.02.16.03 to 24.02.16.04.
- The name of the state in three examples was changed to avoid confusion.
- 24.02.17.01 A new section was added on how to use the Automated Response Unit (ARU). This 2 page section can be printed out and used as a desk aid.
- 24.02.17.02 The header "Wisconsin EBT – Language Line" was changed to "Wisconsin EBT Interpreter Services." Information was moved from 24.02.17.01 to 24.02.17.02. AT&T language line is no longer the vendor for these services. Interpreter services is a more general title.
- 24.02.21 The report number C099 was added for CARES BI727A-BOM-"EBT Account Balances Over \$5 that may be expunged".
- 24.02.22 The section was clarified. A new line of data on BIET does not always mean that a card is ordered by CARES. For example, a new line of data is added when the case is expunged. The cardholder name did not change. The status changed from Y (has

access) to E (expunged). A card is not ordered in this situation.

24.03.03.04 Additional examples of transactions were added to the Detail Journal Inquiry screen print.

24.04.03 The section name was changed from "Install CAPS Device" to "Install and Use CAPS Device." The subsection 24.04.03.06 was added for Card Activation/Initial PIN Selection, 24.04.03.07 was added for "PIN change", and 24.04.03.08 is now "Most Common Error Messages."

New 25.00 A new Chapter 25.00 was added and renamed "Processing Guidelines."

The Food Stamp First Aid Kit was written as a desk aid for FS workers. It gives detailed case examples on a variety of topics and includes CARES screen prints in the examples. This release includes the addition of the first 8 chapters of the First Aid Kit to the handbook, with revisions. They're added as part of the new appendix chapter 25 "Processing Guidelines." New subsections will be added as needed. The current Chapter 25 Abbreviations is now renamed Chapter 26 Abbreviations.

In the next FS Handbook release, the remaining chapters of the First Aid Kit will be incorporated within Chapter 25 and the First Aid Kit will become obsolete and removed from ONSPI's website.

Because CARES screen prints do not format correctly with the web design of the FS Online Handbook, the Processing Guidelines Chapter is written as an Adobe Acrobat pdf. That means that when you go to it, you will see a link to the pdf, as in Ch 24 EBT. That also means that when using the web based search engine of the handbook, any information within pdf documents will not be found in the search. Also, if you print the handbook, the pdf's nested within the handbook will not print out. To search for information in pdf's, open it and use Acrobat's "Find" function (the binoculars icon). To print a specific pdf, you must open it and print from within Acrobat.

TYPOS, TECHNICAL, OR HYPERTEXT LINK CHANGES

Search Engine	<p>The search engine was updated to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the search criteria in bold, if it appears in the first 4 lines of the search return, 2. List the correct number of hits, and 3. Correct the use of the asterisk when searching. You must put the search term in quotes followed by an asterisk to find variations of a word. For example, to find cat., categorical, or categorically in the handbook, write "cat"* in the search field and click on "search."
Help Text	The FS Online Handbook help text was updated to explain the correct usage of the asterisk when searching the handbook.
Links to pdfs	<p>Links to external pdf documents are found in the online handbook in 07.08.00, 08.01.00, 18.06.00, all of Ch 20, 24.01, and 25.01. When you click on a pdf link, a new window will now open with the pdf. It will no longer be forced to fit in the right frame (the lower right side of your screen). To maximize the size of the new window, click on the square icon in the upper right hand corner of the window.</p> <p>After opening a pdf window, if you click on another pdf link in the doc, it will replace the previous pdf in that window and will not open a new window for each time you click on a pdf.</p>
Sanctions Unit Q. 11, 12, and 13	Links to incorrect logic flow questions were fixed. A "no" response to Q. 11 takes the user to Q. 14, a "no" response to Q. 12 takes the user Q. 14, and a "yes" response to Q. 13 takes the user to Q. 14.

Introductory Financial Unit Q. 2	Links were added from Q. 2 to the Assets Unit and the Unearned Income Unit.
Vehicle Unit Policy Change	A link to the Assets Unit was added.
Assets Unit Q. 3	A link to the Asset Test and Divestment Unit was added.
Asset Test and Divestment Unit Q. 10	A link to the Unearned Income Unit was added.
Unearned Income Unit Q. 3	A link to the Earned and Training Income Unit was added.
Earned and Training Income Unit Q. 8	A link to the Room and Board Income Test unit was added.
Room and Board Income Test Unit Q. 1, 2, and 6	A link to the Income Computation Unit was added.
Income Computation Unit Q. 14 and 15	A link to the Dependent Care Unit was added.
Dependent Care Unit Q. 1, 2, 9, and 10	A link to the Shelter and Utilities Computation Unit was added.
Shelter and Utilities Computation Unit Q. 2	A link to 16.08.00 Utilities was added.
Shelter and Utilities Computation Unit Q. 16, 18, 21, and 22	A link to the Income Test Unit was added.
Income Test Unit Q. 2 and 4	A link to the Allotment Unit was added.
Allotment Unit Q. 29	A link to the Review Date Unit was added.
Review Date Unit	A link to 21.02.03 was corrected to go to 21.03.03.
03.01.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.01.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.02.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.02.04	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.02.05	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.02.06	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.02.08	Links were updated to the correct format.
04.03.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
05.03.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
05.03.01	Links were updated to the correct format.

07.01.01	A typo was corrected under dotpoint 4b. Text was accidentally repeated from dotpoint 5. Also, this subsection was renamed "Student Eligibility" from "Enrollment" to be more clear.
07.02.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.03.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.03.01.02	A sentence was inadvertently left out of this section on Carl Perkins Vocational Aid during the conversion to the online handbook. It was added back here: "Disregard aid from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act before you figure deductions. Sources of this income are:"
07.04.01	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.05.01	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.05.02	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.05.04	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.01	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.02	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.03	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.04	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.04.01	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.05.01	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.06.05.02	Links were updated to the correct format.
07.07.00	Links were updated to the correct format.
16.06.00	A link to the Child Day Care Manual was removed. It is not online at the present time.
16.07.00.01	A link was corrected to send the user to 22.03.04 Shelter and Utility Expenses.
17.02.00, 17.03.00	The end of the section title was cut off in the last release for these sections. It was fixed here.
22.01.02, 22.04.01, 22.04.02, 22.04.03, 22.04.04, 22.04.05, 22.05.01, 22.05.02, 22.05.03, 22.05.04, 22.05.05, 22.05.06	The word "Verification" was added to the end of the subchapter title for clarification.
Ch 22 all	Appendix Chapter 22 Verification was reordered for a better flow. The new ordering is: 22.01 Verification Introduction 22.02 Nonfinancial Verification 22.03 Financial Verification 22.04 Questionable Information 22.05 Discrepancies in Verification 22.06 Responsibilities for Verification 22.07 Verification Sources

22.08 Case Documentation

22.03.02	A link was added to the Asset Guidelines section at 11.01.00.
22.03.03	A link was added to the Dependent Care section at 16.06.00.
22.03.04	A link was added to the Shelter section at 16.07.00 and the Utilities section at 16.08.00.
22.03.05	A link was added to the Medical Expenses section at 16.04.03.
22.03.06	A link was added to the Child Support Payments section at 16.05.00.
Old 25.00	Chapter 25.00 Abbreviations was moved to become Ch. 26.00 Abbreviations.